UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OUR SIXTY-NINTH PROGRAM

THE BUTCH THOMPSON TRIO

SPONSORED BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
AND THE NEW HAMPSHIRE
LIBRARY OF TRADITIONAL JAZZ

8 PM MONDAY
MARCH 26, 1990
GRANITE STATE ROOM
MEMORIAL UNION
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
THE ARTISTS

THE BUTCH THOMPSON TRIO

Butch Thompson may not be exactly "a legend in his own time," but he will do. How else can we describe a white Minnesotan, born at the start of the be-bop era, who becomes the definitive exponent of Jelly Roll Morton, Fats Waller, and James P. Johnson? Or a jazz pianist who develops a national reputation in this age of audio-visual overkill via that sonically archaic pre-TV medium, radio? Or, for that matter, a jazz artist of any stylistic or instrumental persuasion who broadcasts weekly—and live?!

No stranger to our stage, having performed on this series previously both alone and with Jimmy Mazzy, Butch comes to us tonight in the trio format so familiar to devotees of Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon family on "A Prairie Home Companion," where Butch's voice and personality became as identifiable as his playing. (How many piano player's voices have you been able to recognize since Fats Waller?!) Since his last visit to UNH, Butch has played on the sound track to "Eight Men Out," prepared for a Broadway musical based on the life of Jelly Roll Morton, increased his appearances on recordings to around 60, toured Europe, Australia, (and of course, the United States), performed as guest soloist with numerous symphony orchestras, yet through it all maintained his association with the venerable Hall Brothers Band in Minneapolis with which he got his start in 1962 (on clarinet!). Most recently, he released on Daring Records "The 88s," three collections of piano solos representing the New Orleans, Chicago, and New York "schools," a project highly praised in not one but two articles in the Boston Sunday Globe of January 7.

As the preceding would indicate, Butch's style is permeated with the New Orleans tradition that he has taken the trouble to explore first-hand, as well as its geographical progeny. He plays it with care and respect, imagination and enthusiasm, blending compositional and improvisational values in a manner that would doubtless pleasantly surprise its creators, who may well have been unaware of the extent of their own originality, something that the passage of the decades reveals with ever-increasing clarity. It will be fascinating to hear Butch tonight demonstrate his self-contained solo technique in the more flexible framework that a rhythm section allows.

Bill Evans began his career as a trombonist, but switched to string bass in order to seize an opportunity with the then newly forming Hall Brothers Band; his range of New Orleans-oriented associations is almost as broad as Butch's. And Hal Smith tops them both, since he actually lives there, having deserted Indianapolis for the musical and historical stimulation of that sacred city.

Jazz historian Eric Kriss writes in liner notes to "The 88s," "Butch works with the spaces to get at the soul of the song."—a good model for the young. And a writer for the Milwaukee Journal describes his style as "warm jazz"—a harbinger of spring, and a testament to the renewability of the art that brings us all together once again.

Enjoy!
THE BUTCH THOMPSON TRIO

BUTCH THOMPSON  Piano
BILL EVANS  Bass
HAL SMITH  Drums

Tape recorders and cameras are not permitted due to contractual arrangements. Your cooperation is requested.
THE SERIES

The UNH Traditional Jazz Series began in 1979. It promotes the enjoyment and understanding of the art through concerts featuring musicians of regional, national, and international prominence. The program represents a unique endeavor to expand interest and honor outstanding talent and achievement.

Musicians wishing to do so are encouraged to offer their recordings for sale or mail order during intermission; a brief announcement may be made. The sponsors have no financial interest in such sales beyond offering a courtesy service to the artists and the public.

Program Notes—Paul Verrette
Production—David Seiler

THE SCHEDULE

September 11  New Black Eagle Jazz Band
October 30   Peanuts Hucko & Tom Gallant Trio
November 27  Gray Sargent Trio
January 29   Milt Hinton Quartet featuring Andy McGhee
February 26  Howard Alden Trio
March 26     Butch Thompson Trio
April 30     Vince Giordano's New Orleans Nighthawks